Our Toronto

VOL. 5 **ISSUE 1** WINTER / SPRING 2012

Building a great city – together

How will you remember the War of 1812?

Photo courtesy of Kathy Vale

Toronto's past and future converge at Fort York.

TWO hundred years of peace makes it easy to forget a war. The peace and prosperity resulting from the War of 1812 is what makes it so important to remember, and is why Torontonians should honour and learn about those who sacrificed so much at that time. The war transformed Toronto from a town of 700 into a city of commerce. The idea and identity of both Canada and Toronto rose from the ashes of the war.

The City of Toronto will commemorate the War of 1812 Bicentennial with more than 100 events in 2012 and 2013. These events include concerts, art exhibitions, educational programs and re-enactments.

Toronto will commemorate the official declaration of the War of 1812 by hosting a number of events in partnership with Luminato from June 15 to June 24, including a concert by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and an installation of 200 tents at Fort York telling the story of civilians affected by the war. From March until September, the Market Gallery will present the exhibition Finding the Fallen: The Battle of York Remembered.

Bicentennial legacy projects include the revitalization of the Fort York National Historic Site as a major War of 1812 battleground, now containing Canada's largest collection of authentic 1812-era buildings, and the creation of a virtual heritage trail network.

The Bicentennial program is a collective effort involving more than 40 partners from Toronto's arts, cultural, First Nations, heritage, corporate and military communities.

toronto.ca/1812

311 offers online options

YOU may already know that 311 is the City of Toronto's 24/7 customer service phone line. But did you know that 311 Toronto offers a wide range of online services? Visit the 311 web page at toronto.ca/311 to access City services, report a problem or get answers to your questions — all without making a phone call.

311 Knowledge Base

Search the 311 Knowledge Base for up-to-date answers about City services and programs. The online Knowledge Base contains more than 10,000 entries and includes most of the information that 311 customer service representatives use when handling phone inquiries.

311 self-service sequests

Request a City service or report a problem by selecting a self-service option (under "Request" on the 311 homepage). More than 50 self-service requests are available, including:

- Waste pick-up and missed collections
- Bin orders, exchanges and repairs
- Graffiti and litter
- Potholes and other road issues
- Water and hydrant problems
- Tree pruning, removal and planting
- Property issues and bylaw enforcement

Status tracking

Track the status of a 311 service request by entering your reference number (see "Track your service request" on the 311 homepage). When applicable, 311 will provide a reference number after you place a service request by phone or online.

Other services and information

The 311 web page also connects you with other City of Toronto online services such as payments, registration and specialized applications. If you need personal assistance, just call 311 — it's available 24/7 in more than 180 languages.

toronto.ca/311

Toronto Retail Holidays PUBLIC SURVEY

TO shop, or not to shop? That is the question the City of Toronto is asking the public to help them answer at an online survey. The public is being asked to provide input about their retail shopping holiday preferences to help inform the City of Toronto about making changes to its current holiday shopping bylaw. As part of the City's public consultations around this bylaw, the survey (online until the end of March 2012) can be taken by any resident, labour or faith-based group, or business organization.

toronto.ca/holidayshopping

DOORS Open Toronto — on May 26 and May 27 this year — is an annual, city-wide weekend celebration with free access to more than 100 architecturally, historically, culturally and socially significant buildings.

The theme this year is "200 years of building the urban city." Rare access to historic schools, a bank vault and a crime scene investigation laboratory will highlight the vibrant architecture, along with associated people and personalities, and show how the city has evolved over the last two centuries.

toronto.ca/doorsopen

Our Toronto

Building a great city – together

Our Toronto is distributed to every household in the city. Fully-accessible PDF and audio versions are also available on the City's website (toronto.ca/ourtoronto). You can read it online in the languages listed below, or contact us to have a printed copy in your language mailed to you. Call, write or email to have a Braille or large print version mailed to you.

Vous trouverez ce journal en français au site web ci-dessous. (French)

(Chinese)

இந்தச் செய்திதாளின் தமிழ்ப் பிரதி பிரையும் இணையத் தளத்தில் இடம்பெறுகிறது. (Tamil)

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Este periódico está disponible en español en el sitio web indicado abajo. (Spanish)

Este jornal está disponível em português no sítio Web abaixo indicado. (Portuguese)

Makikita ang Tagalog na edisyon ng pahayagang ito sa website sa ibaba. (Tagalog)

(Urdu)

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Fort York Visitor Centre

THE Fort York Visitor Centre is a War of 1812 Bicentennial legacy project set to begin construction this year. This 2,000-square-metre (22,000-square-foot) building is the centrepiece of the extensive revitalization now occurring at Fort York National Historic Site. Exhibitions will orient visitors to the site, and public programming and modern facilities will enhance the public's experience of the city's birthplace. Designed by Patkau Architects Inc. (Vancouver), with Kearns Mancini Architects Inc. (Toronto), the Visitor Centre received a 2011 Canadian Architect Award of Excellence.

toronto.ca/visitorcentre

Architectural rendering of the Visitor Centre courtesy of Patkau Architects Inc., and Kearns Mancini Architects Inc.

A message from Mayor Rob Ford

FOR the first time since amalgamation, the City of Toronto will spend less money than it did the year before. This is due to the hard work of Council and City staff over the past year to begin the task of rebuilding the City's fiscal foundation.

The process to get spending under control began long before the 2012 Budget. In fact, it started with a number of exercises that included a review of core services, an efficiency review, a user fee review and the 2011 Budget.

Highlights from the 2012 Budget are many and include a lower-than-inflation property tax (after zero increase last year), $135 million which will reduce our borrowing need and fund the purchase of new transit vehicles, making government smaller by 1,456 positions, finding hundreds of millions in efficiencies and savings, and reducing the City's reliance on one-off spending to cover operating costs.

Rebuilding the City's fiscal foundation does not stop with the 2012 Budget. We have made great progress and will need to continue. The 2012 Budget is a reasonable and responsible plan that has strengthened Toronto's fiscal position. In turn, this will ensure spending and the size of government is kept under control so that the City's energies and resources can be focused on continuing to make Toronto a great place to live, raise a family and do business.

Here's your chance to participate in cleaning up Toronto

THE City's Clean Toronto Together program begins in April. This cleanup effort involves hundreds of City staff working together to remove the litter and debris left behind after the winter, and also to remove illegal graffiti.

Then it's your turn. Sign up for Mayor Rob Ford's Community Clean Up Day, which will take place on Saturday, April 21 (alternate day — Sunday, April 22). Get together with family, friends and neighbours and clean a public space that is important to you. It could be a park, local street or a ravine. Help with Toronto's spring housekeeping and together we can take action to keep our communities clean and litter-free.

Once again this year, GLAD® is our lead sponsor for this cleanup activity and CP24 is the television sponsor.

You can register for the event or get more information at toronto.ca/litter or by calling 311. We ask participants to register so the City can tell collection crews where to find and haul away the garbage bags.

Let's all Clean Toronto Together.

toronto.ca/litter
311

Collective bargaining between the City of Toronto and its unions

ON February 5, the City of Toronto reached a tentative agreement with the Toronto Civic Employees' Union Local 416 (CUPE), which represents the City's 6,000 outside workers and paramedics. Details of the agreement will be released once it is ratified by the Local 416 membership and subsequently approved by City Council.

The tentative agreement is fair to our employees, reasonable and affordable for residents and businesses, and will allow the Toronto Public Service to continue to deliver high quality services.

Bargaining with CUPE Local 79, which represents the City's 23,000 "inside workers", continues.

For up-to-date information on bargaining, please visit the City's website.

toronto.ca/bargaining

Council approves the 2012 City Budget

ON January 17, 2012, Toronto City Council approved a balanced, tax-supported 2012 Operating Budget of $9.4 billion and a 2012-2021 Capital Budget and Plan of $14.8 billion. The 2012 Operating Budget includes a 2.5 per cent property tax increase for residents, a 0.83 per cent tax increase for businesses and a 10-cent fare increase for TTC customers.

The City made major advancements in achieving fiscal sustainability in the 2012 Budget by reducing the City's reliance on one-time revenues from $327 million to $102 million, mainly by bringing expenses more in line with City revenues.

About the Operating Budget

The Operating Budget funds everyday expenses such as fuel, staff salaries and utilities. The 2.5 per cent residential tax rate increase translates to an increase of $60 for the average residential household assessed at $447,090 in 2012, with the final 2012 municipal taxes on such a home being $2,459.89 (excluding education taxes). This change will appear in your property tax bill in May.

The 2012 Budget marks the first decline in gross expenditures since Toronto's amalgamation with a $20 million decrease.

Capital Budget and Plan

The Capital Budget and Plan is a strategy for funding current and future year investments in infrastructure such as transit, roads, buildings and parks.

The 2012-2021 Capital Budget and Plan achieves a proper balance between maintaining existing City assets in a state of good repair and accommodating Toronto's growing population.

Infrastructure projects related to transit and transportation make up 68 per cent of all the City's expenditures.

Solid Waste Management Services

Council approved a 2012 Solid Waste Management Services Budget comprised of:

- Operating Budget of $345.8 million
- Capital Budget of $103 million (including carry forward funding of $43.6 million) with planned capital works over the 2012-2021 period of $559.4 million

The approved 2012 Solid Waste Management Budget results in no rate increase for the majority of residential customers. Some waste rates are being restructured to create fair, harmonized rates across the entire customer base. The City remains committed to its 70 per cent waste diversion goal.

Toronto Water

The 2012 Toronto Water Budget includes:

- Operating Budget of $381 million
- Capital Budget of $607 million with planned capital works over the 2012-2021 period of $7.9 billion
- Projected revenue of $893 million

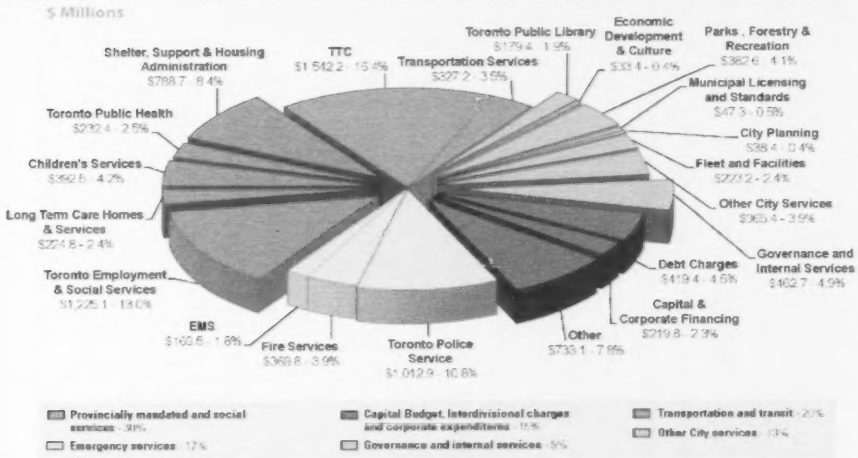
The 2012 Toronto Water Budget includes a 9 per cent water rate increase (17 cents per day for the average Toronto household). This is a planned increase and part of a multi-year budget and infrastructure renewal program to tackle a $1.7 billion backlog of repairs. This rate includes costs for all water services including drinking water, wastewater and stormwater treatment. Toronto's water rates continue to remain lower than those of most neighbouring municipalities.

Future outlook

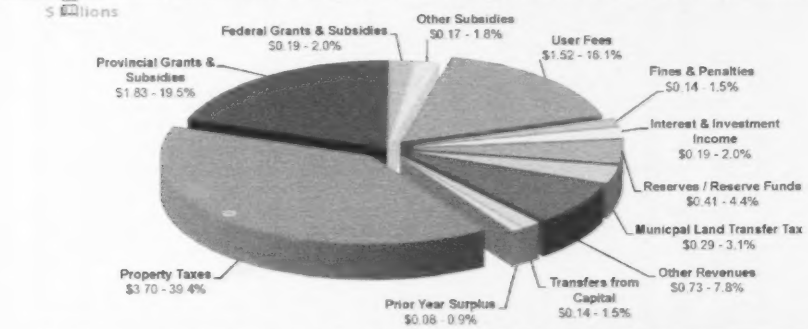
In 2013 and 2014, the City will move forward on building a sustainable, affordable and well-managed city by securing more predictable revenue sources and finding further savings. Toronto continues to have one of the highest possible credit ratings, one of the lowest residential property tax rates in Ontario and a more diversified revenue base than other municipalities.

toronto.ca/budget2012

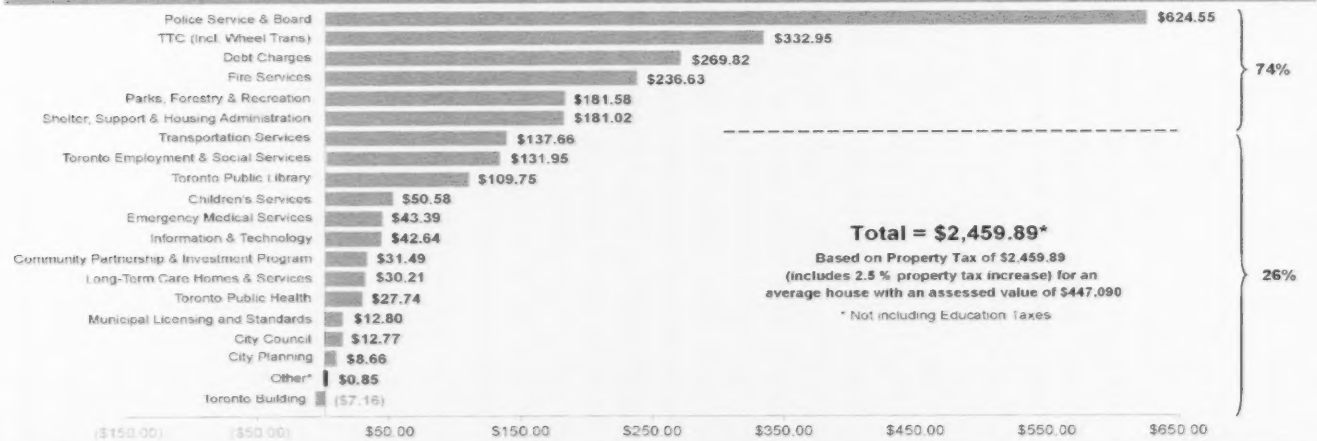
Where does the money go? (Operating Budget)


$ Millions
Toronto Public Library $179.4 - 1.9%
Economic Development & Culture $33.4 - 0.4%
Parks, Forestry & Recreation $382.6 - 4.1%
Shelter, Support & Housing Administration $788.7 - 8.4%
TTC $1,542.2 - 16.4%
Transportation Services $327.2 - 3.5%
Municipal Licensing and Standards $47.3 - 0.5%
Toronto Public Health $232.4 - 2.5%
City Planning $38.4 - 0.4%
Children's Services $392.5 - 4.2%
Fleet and Facilities $220.2 - 2.4%
Other City Services $365.4 - 3.9%
Long Term Care Homes & Services $224.8 - 2.4%
Governance and Internal Services $462.7 - 4.9%
Debt Charges $419.4 - 4.5%
Toronto Employment & Social Services $1,225.1 - 13.0%
Capital & Corporate Financing $219.8 - 2.3%
EMS $160.6 - 1.8%
Fire Services $368.8 - 3.9%
Toronto Police Service $1,012.9 - 10.8%
Other $733.1 - 7.8%
Provincially mandated and social services - 39%
Capital Budget, Interdivisional charges and corporate expenditures - 15%
Transportation and transit - 20%
Emergency services - 12%
Governance and internal services - 5%
Other City services - 13%

Where does the money come from? (Operating Budget)


$ Millions
Federal Grants & Subsidies $0.19 - 2.0%
Other Subsidies $0.17 - 1.8%
User Fees $1.52 - 16.1%
Provincial Grants & Subsidies $1.83 - 19.5%
Fines & Penalties $0.14 - 1.5%
Interest & Investment Income $0.19 - 2.0%
Reserves / Reserve Funds $0.41 - 4.4%
Municpal Land Transfer Tax $0.29 - 3.1%
Property Taxes $3.70 - 39.4%
Other Revenues $0.73 - 7.8%
Transfers from Capital $0.14 - 1.5%
Prior Year Surplus $0.08 - 0.9%

How your tax dollars will work for you in 2012


Police Service & Board $624.55
TTC (Incl. Wheel Trans) $332.95
Debt Charges $269.82
Fire Services $236.63
Parks, Forestry & Recreation $181.58
Shelter, Support & Housing Administration $181.02
Transportation Services $137.66
Toronto Employment & Social Services $131.95
Toronto Public Library $109.75
Children's Services $50.58
Emergency Medical Services $43.39
Information & Technology $42.64
Community Partnership & Investment Program $31.49
Long-Term Care Homes & Services $30.21
Toronto Public Health $27.74
Municipal Licensing and Standards $12.80
City Council $12.77
City Planning $8.66
Other* $0.85
Toronto Building ($7.16)
74%
26%
Total = $2,459.89*
Based on Property Tax of $2,459.89 (includes 2.5 % property tax increase) for an average house with an assessed value of $447,090
* Not including Education Taxes
($150.00) ($50.00) $50.00 $150.00 $250.00 $350.00 $450.00 $550.00 $650.00

2012 TAXICAB INDUSTRY REVIEW

THE City of Toronto is conducting its first comprehensive review of the Toronto taxi industry since 1998.

The taxi industry in Toronto currently consists of approximately 10,000 licensed taxicab drivers and 4,800 licensed vehicles.

The goal of the review is to resolve industry issues and bring forward a fair and equitable plan. The review will involve extensive consultations with input from stakeholders, industry observers and others who will be affected by these reforms.

In late 2011, the City invited stakeholders to help determine current industry issues. In addition to the issues identified by stakeholders, the next phase of the review will address:

- the effectiveness of the Ambassador program
- conversion to one dedicated (or purpose-built) taxi vehicle
- on-demand accessible service
- ownership and transferability of taxicab licences
- leasing of taxicab licences
- the role of designated agents
- the role of taxicab brokerages, and
- other bylaw amendments.

In the first half of this year, stakeholders and members of the public will be able to work toward resolving these issues by attending consultation meetings, participating in surveys and providing feedback.

Throughout the review, stakeholders and members of the public are invited to submit comments via email, voice message or letter.

A final report with recommendations will be produced later this year.

The most current information is available on the web page below, where you can also sign up to receive regular updates.

toronto.ca/taxireview

TTC – Moving toward a better tomorrow

THE Toronto Transit Commission's Toronto Rocket subway trains are becoming a more frequent sight on the Yonge-University-Spadina subway line. About a dozen new trains are running in service and more are coming each month. These trains are replacing the system's oldest trains.

The Toronto Rocket provides a range of new features, including full-length, open door design for more space and easier movement; accessible multi-purpose areas for riders with mobility devices, strollers, etc.; closed circuit cameras, audio/visual customer information systems; and anti-bacterial, colour contrasted vertical hand holds.

The TTC's next-generation of streetcars will be one step closer to reality when the first test vehicle debuts on Toronto streets this summer.

Accessible, low-floor streetcar service is scheduled to begin in 2014 when the first of 204 vehicles begin replacing the existing streetcars. They will be more comfortable, more spacious, and yes, equipped with air conditioning.

A mock-up of the new accessible, low-floor streetcar was on public display last November and was very well-received. The new streetcars will be maintained, with some storage, at a new streetcar carhouse at Ashbridges Bay, at the southeast corner of Leslie Street and Lake Shore Boulevard East.

ttc.ca

Parkettes help bring life to the street

THIS summer, Dundas Street West underwent a makeover with the creation of eight parkettes on the south side of Dundas between Dovercourt and Lansdowne.

The project was the result of a partnership between the Civic Design group in City Planning and the Dundas West Business Improvement Area. The parkettes include decorative planting and paving, as well as custom designed benches and bike rings.

The Civic Design group coordinates, designs, and implements improvements to public space in consultation with other City divisions who are responsible for streetscape improvements.

By taking a creative approach to improving and coordinating ongoing municipal construction on public lands, Civic Design aims to shape the urban environment, improve safety and upgrade design. Employing in-house expertise and a modest capital budget, staff work toward enhancing basic street reconstruction projects.

toronto.ca/planning/urbdesign/civicimprove.htm

Enjoy Toronto's green spaces by bicycle

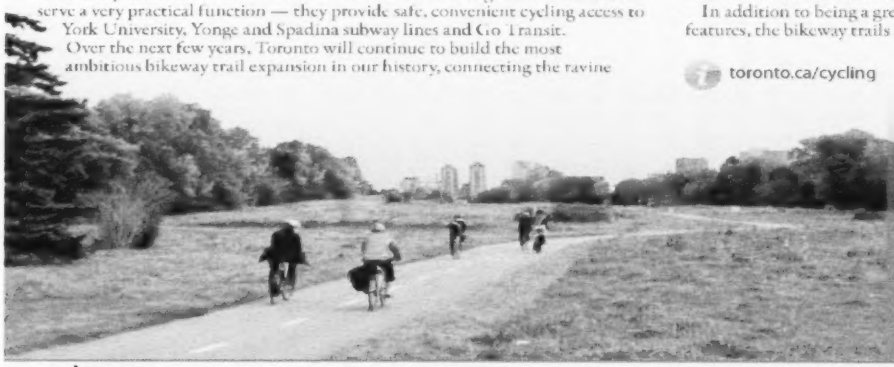
WHAT could be more enjoyable than riding along Toronto's waterfront or its cool, shady ravine trails? Our city has about 200 km of major trails, which are an integral part of the bikeway network.

Thirty kilometres of new bikeway trails were completed in 2011 in the Gatineau and Finch hydro corridors across North York and Scarborough. These trails also serve a very practical function — they provide safe, convenient cycling access to York University, Yonge and Spadina subway lines and Go Transit.

Over the next few years, Toronto will continue to build the most ambitious bikeway trail expansion in our history, connecting the ravine trails and hydro corridor to the lake. The Waterfront Trail is being upgraded across the city and an exciting new trail along Queen's Quay will ultimately provide a continuous waterfront trail through the central waterfront between Bathurst Street and Parliament Street. Work is also in progress to improve connections to the Don Trail system.

In addition to being a great place to enjoy Toronto's green spaces and natural features, the bikeway trails are a safe place for families to cycle together.

toronto.ca/cycling



TORONTO CYCLING MAPS

Each year the City produces a cycling map of bicycle lanes, routes, trails and more to help cyclists plan their trips. Copies are available free at public libraries, community centres and bike shops in your neighbourhood.

Tips for preventing basement floods

WITH snow melting and spring showers around the corner, the City of Toronto offers tips to help residents deal with wet weather and avoid basement flooding.

- Disconnect your downspouts that empty into the City's sewer system and direct the rainwater to your lawn and garden or into a rain barrel.
- Clear leaves and other debris from eavestroughs and downspouts.
- Ensure the ground is sloping away from your home's foundation walls.
- Seal window wells and fix leaks in basement walls and around windows.
- Increase green space and use soft-surface landscaping (such as porous pavement or shrubs) to allow water to soak into the ground.
- Clear roadside sewer grates (catchbasins) of debris and leaves if it is safe to do so.
- Reduce household water use during heavy rainfall, if possible, to reduce the strain on the sewer system.
- Homeowners can also take advantage of City subsidies of up to $3,200 per property to assist with the cost of installing certain flood protection devices, such as a back water valve or sump pump.
- If you have an existing back water valve or sump pump, check that they are working properly. Consider installing a battery backup on your sump pump, in case of a power outage.

If you experience a flooded basement, you can report it by calling 311, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

toronto.ca/water

STORMWATER TREATMENT FACILITY RECEIVES ARCHITECTURE AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

WATERFRONT Toronto's West Don Lands stormwater treatment facility has been recognized with a 2011 Award of Excellence by Canadian Architect magazine. The annual awards recognize architectural design excellence and are given to architects and architectural graduates for buildings in the design stage. Designed by gh3 Architects and Landscape Architects/ R.V. Anderson Associates Limited, the 300-square-metre treatment facility will be built as part of the stormwater treatment system to serve the West Don Lands and the future North Keating Channel community. The building, which will house the system's main treatment plant, is intended to be a landmark structure for the West Don Lands. Construction of the facility, located at the northeast corner of Lake Shore Boulevard and Cherry Street, will start and finish in 2013.

For more information, and to see images, go to canadianarchitect.com/Awards/SWQF.aspx

Are you doing renovation work this spring?

THINKING about renovating your home? These tips will help you save money and protect the environment:

Install water-saving appliances and devices

Replacing your current appliances with a high-efficiency washing machine, dishwasher, or low-flush toilets can significantly reduce your water and electricity bills. Toilets alone account for almost one-third of your household's water consumption. Also update your faucet acrators and shower heads to continue the water savings.

Avoid cross connections

Many homes have two types of pipes. Sanitary pipes deliver dirty water from your toilets, washing machines, sinks and bathtubs to a wastewater treatment plant, while stormwater pipes deliver rainwater and melted snow directly into the nearest waterway. A cross connection is created when a sanitary plumbing fixture (such as a toilet) is mistakenly connected to a storm drain, sending raw sewage directly to a watercourse.

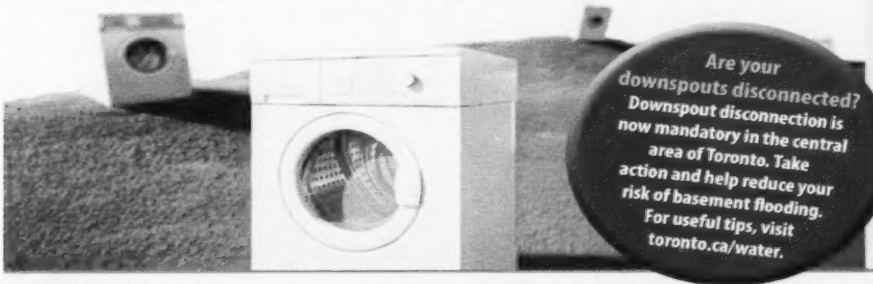
Cross connections carry fines of up to $50,000. It could also mean damaging or destroying your new renovation. Before you begin, contact Toronto Building to have them review the drain plans of your property and be sure to get a City building permit for any plumbing work. The small upfront fee can save you thousands of dollars — and it's the law! Consider hiring a City-licensed plumber with proper training and expertise to make sure you are properly connected to the sewer system.

Disconnect your downspout

Disconnection of your home's downspout (the pipe that carries rainwater/snowmelt from the roof of your home into the sewer system) is now mandatory if you live in the central area of the city. If you are replacing your eavestroughs or doing any roof work this spring, it's the perfect time to disconnect your downspout.

Before you start, make sure you have a suitable discharge area from your downspout and that the water flow will be directed away from your home's foundation. Wherever possible, extend your downspout at least two metres (six feet) away from your foundation walls. But make sure the flow of water will not cause damage to your neighbour's property or flow directly onto a City sidewalk.

toronto.ca/water/downspout


Are your downspouts disconnected?
Downspout disconnection is now mandatory in the central area of Toronto. Take action and help reduce your risk of basement flooding. For useful tips, visit toronto.ca/water.

CAPITAL PROJECT SPOTLIGHT:

Earl Bales Stormwater Management Pond

City water rate dollars directly fund Toronto Water capital projects, including underground infrastructure renewal, upgrades to water and wastewater treatment plants, basement flooding protection, and improvements to lake and river water quality.

THE City of Toronto officially opened the Earl Bales Stormwater Management Pond, one of the largest facilities of its kind in Canada on November 18, 2011. The pond spans an area of 3.2 hectares, is about 3 metres deep and can manage and treat stormwater runoff from a surrounding catchment area of 550 hectares, which includes residential and industrial development areas.

Stormwater management ponds have an important purpose. As they gather surface water runoff, rain and melted snow, they improve water quality in watercourses and reduce the possibility of flooding and property damage. Through a combination of landscape and structural features, stormwater management facilities slow water run-off during wet weather and allow pollutants to settle out. The accumulated water is then released gradually back into the natural watercourse, helping to avoid erosion and downstream flooding.

Located adjacent to the Don Valley Golf Course in the valley lands of the West Don River, the Earl Bales pond was designed to blend into the natural environment. It includes a pathway through the site connecting the area with a pre-existing trail system. Key innovations include using the pond water for golf course irrigation in the summer and for snowmaking on the Earl Bales ski hill in the winter.

The City's Wet Weather Flow Master Plan identified the need for the Earl Bales pond to help deal with stormwater discharges to the West Don River that have harmed water quality and fish habitat. The pond has quickly become a favourite stretch along the walking path in the park, proving that function can be beautiful.

toronto.ca/water

Making better underground connections

IF you spend any time in Toronto's downtown, you're likely familiar with the PATH network, which provides nearly 30 kilometres of underground walkways and access to more than 1,200 shops and services. PATH accommodates 100,000 commuters daily and generates nearly $1.5 billion in sales revenue annually.

From its beginnings, the PATH (not an acronym) has grown and increased in popularity by offering convenience and year-round, climate-controlled comfort to those travelling in the downtown core.

In addition to office connections, PATH connects to municipal and provincial facilities, nine daycares, four schools, two libraries, 10 parks and several residential buildings. The PATH system has also acquired an international reputation. To attract tourists, it hosts concerts, fundraisers, conventions and other activities throughout the year.

The City of Toronto Planning division embarked on a PATH Master Plan study to clarify the City's role in the continued development of the PATH system.

The study has been well received by the public. Key recommendations include:

- identification of important future connections,
- identification/design of significant entry locations, and
- updated design guidelines for a range of users.

The PATH provides Toronto with a unique competitive edge that helps define its world-class status.

toronto.ca/planning/tp_pathmp.htm

Plant herbarium finds a new home at the Royal Ontario Museum

FOR many years, a unique collection of 1,427 plant specimens has been housed in a dark corner on the 24th floor of Metro Hall. Recently, this herbarium has been freed from the confines of the building and sent to the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM), where the contents of the herbarium will be studied by botanists.

The herbarium houses hundreds of plant pressings collected by parks planners and landscape architects in the former Metropolitan Toronto Parks and Culture Division in the early 1970s. The plants were collected in parks across Toronto in locations where both common and rare plants grew. The plants were then mapped, pressed and stored in a large cabinet.

When the ROM was contacted about the possibility of providing a new home for the herbarium, staff there were quick to recognize the scientific value of the collection. The plant pressings, along with the maps, will help to tell the story of the changed — and changing — natural environment in Toronto. This information may help direct planting, protection and restoration efforts in the future.

2012 Community Environment Days

COMMUNITY Environment Day events start in April and run into October. As in previous years, there will be 44 events, one per ward across the city. These events accept all types of items for reuse and you can drop off household hazardous waste (such as batteries, compact fluorescent bulbs, propane cylinders and tanks) and electronics for either recycling or safe disposal. A list of accepted items and the schedule are posted on the web page.

toronto.ca/environment_days

Who's the greenest of them all?

GREEN TORONTO AWARDS

THE CITY OF TORONTO'S ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

THE winners of the City's Environmental Awards of Excellence will be announced at a special evening of awards, music and celebration on Friday, April 13 at the Green Living Show. Residents are invited to attend the 8th annual Green Toronto Awards to help celebrate the people, groups, organizations and companies leading the way to a cleaner, greener Toronto. Winners will receive an award and $5,000 to further their work on the environment, courtesy of award sponsors. Award categories include Community Projects, Green Business, Local Food, Leadership, Youth Leadership, Green Design, Energy Conservation, Environmental Awareness and Water Efficiency. The awards are a partnership between the City of Toronto and Green Living Enterprises. Join us on Friday, April 13 at the Green Living Show, Direct Energy Centre, Exhibition Place.

toronto.ca/greentorontoawards

GOING TO A SOLID WASTE DROP-OFF DEPOT

TORONTO has seven Drop-off Depots that accept various types of waste materials. You could be getting rid of unused cleaning products and paint, propane tanks or tires. Here are some handy guidelines to follow.

For safety reasons, you must drive to a Drop-off Depot. Not all depots accept every type of waste material and operating hours vary depending on the type of waste.

On entering the Drop-off Depot, your vehicle will be weighed and you will be asked for a minimum $20 deposit. The deposit amount depends on the type of waste you are carrying and the weight of your vehicle at the time of entry. After you have finished, you will receive either a refund or extra charges.

Household hazardous waste and electronic waste

Since there is no charge for dropping off hazardous or electronic waste, your vehicle does not need to be weighed. Follow on-site signs and drive directly to the Household Hazardous Waste Depot or electronic waste drop-off area.

toronto.ca/litter

Save money when dropping off a mixed load of material

If you have Household Hazardous Waste and/or electronic waste, which can be dropped off for free, along with other items for which fees apply, bypass the weigh scale and drop off the free items first. Circle back and re-enter the weigh scale area so only your car and the items applicable for fees are weighed.

Disposal fees (Cash, charge, debit)

GARBAGE

$100 per metric tonne (1,000 kg)

Up to 100 kilograms - $10 flat fee

100 kilograms and over - $1 per 10 kilograms or a fraction thereof (for example, 125 kilograms of garbage costs $13)

RECYCLING

$75 per metric tonne (1,000 kg)

Up to 20 kilograms - free

Over 20 kilograms - $1 per 13.33 kilograms or a fraction thereof for the entire amount disposed (e.g. 22 kilograms of recycling costs $2)

Save ON Energy with Toronto Hydro!

toronto hydro
Our City's Source for Energy

TORONTO Hydro-Electric System Limited (Toronto Hydro) has launched its 2012 lineup of residential saveONenergy conservation and demand management programs — designed to help you manage rising electricity bills and reduce electricity consumption.

saveONenergy programs are funded by the Ontario Power Authority (OPA) and offered by local distribution companies, like Toronto Hydro, across the province.

Discounted Energy-Efficient Products: Twice each year, saveONenergy coupons will be featured in-store at participating retailers for discounts on energy-efficient products for the home, including qualified ceiling fans, compact fluorescent light bulbs, clotheslines and power bars. These coupons are available for a limited time: March 30 through April 29 and September 28 through October 28.

saveONenergy Heating & Cooling Incentives: Customers looking to replace their heating and cooling units this year can receive up to $650 when upgrading to qualified energy-efficient heating and cooling systems. Energy-efficient systems use less electricity which can help with further savings on hydro bills.

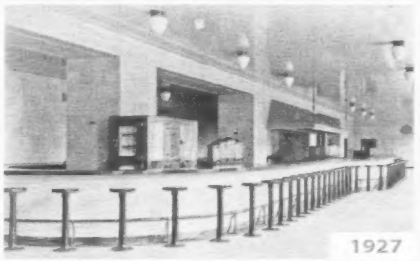
saveONenergy Fridge & Freezer Pickup: Leaving a second fridge or freezer sitting plugged in wastes electricity and can add up to an extra $125 on your bill each year. With the Fridge & Freezer Pickup program, customers can rid themselves of their unwanted appliances free of charge, with one phone call.

saveONenergy New Home Construction: Toronto Hydro is working to educate buyers on the benefits of buying an energy-efficient home and encouraging builders to include energy-efficiency in their plans. Talk to your builder about the New Home Construction program to see if they're a participating contractor.

torontohydro.com/conservation

Toronto THEN&NOW

WHEN Union Station opened in 1927, it had a public lunchroom characterized by a long, narrow space, windows looking onto Front Street and a long serving counter that was typical of that period. This year, the old lunchroom, located on the main level in the west wing, will make a comeback as the new Panorama Lounge for VIA Rail customers. The new lounge preserves many of the room's original heritage features, including its shape, marble-covered walls, plaster ceiling and cornice detailing.



1927

January 19, 2012

Union Station is the busiest, most important multimodal passenger transportation hub in Canada and a National Historic Site. Now under renovation, Union Station is protected under a Heritage Easement Agreement, which defines and limits the design alterations that can be made to the building.

toronto.ca/union_station

Favourite City Service, Favourite City Place

MY favourite place is my own neighbourhood, Weston. You can walk the beautiful tree-lined streets to the park or the corner store. Say "hi" as you stop for a minute and pat the dog a neighbour is walking, or wave to someone sitting on a front porch. The old homes provide the neighbourhood with its roots while the local churches and schools give the next generation their wings. It's our corner of small town Canada with all the advantages of living in the city — as can be seen each year at our annual Neighbours Nite Out.
heritageweston.ca

THE City service that gets the tip of my hat is Preservation Services. They work tirelessly against lack of funds, lack of manpower and especially against lack of appreciation to help us preserve our roots and give us a sense of place. It is so often forgotten that people, tourists in particular, come to Toronto to see history, not condos. Preservation Services remind us that it is very easy to know what you've got only when it's gone.

Do you have a favourite place in the city? Is there a service that you really like a lot?
Write us at ourtoronto@toronto.ca

Need help? Need answers? Call 211, the other 3-digit number

YOU will likely know these telephone numbers: 311 for City services, 411 for telephone directory information and 911 for emergency services. But do you know about 211 for community and social services?

The 211 Information and Referral line is free, confidential and answered by live specialists, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It provides public access to community and social services in one easy step. You can even get help in many different languages.

The 211 specialists are experienced and trained to handle a wide range of requests, such as the location of the nearest community legal clinic or language class, or more complex problems arising from hunger, lack of shelter, abuse, health or other issues. Maybe you just need to know where to turn. Not only are the specialists great listeners, they are also excellent problem solvers. They will refer you to the services that are right for you.

Toronto's 211 service was the first of its kind in Canada when it was launched in 2002.

211toronto.ca

A runner with a cause inspires at the Toronto Challenge

Richard Graves (left) with Reg Paul of Long-Term Care Homes and Services

FOR 20 years, Etobicoke runner Richard Graves has inspired those at the Toronto Challenge (presented by MonsterMortgage.ca) with his physical ability, generosity and dedication to raising money for local organizations.

This exceptional 78-year-old man has competed in races across Canada during his 30-plus year running career. Every year he picks one charity to support by collecting pledges to run in as many races as he can. "I run for the organizations that need help and that aren't getting the money," he said in an Etobicoke Guardian article in 2011. "I like to support the little guys."

In 2011, the Toronto Challenge presented Graves with a special award and letter from Mayor Ford that stated: "Over the last 20 years, you have competed in the Toronto Challenge 5k run each and every year and have been an active supporter of the event and Toronto's seniors. Your contribution is appreciated and we admire and applaud your efforts."

Graves was also part of a four-year Toronto Challenge running competition with hockey great Doug Gilmour. Over that time, he bested Gilmour twice, tied him once and lost only once.

The Toronto Challenge, presented by MonsterMortgage.ca, is an annual City of Toronto fundraising event for long-term care homes and community agencies that provide services and support to Toronto seniors.

Everyone is welcome to join Richard at his 21st annual Toronto Challenge on Sunday June 10, 2012.

toronto.ca/challenge

Toronto Fashion Incubator celebrates 25 years

THE Toronto Fashion Incubator (TFI) is an award-winning non-profit organization that supports and nurtures Canadian fashion entrepreneurs. Established in 1987 as the world's first fashion incubator, TFI's model has been adopted by 33 cities around the globe. Many TFI alumni have established businesses nationally and internationally.

On May 3, TFI will celebrate its 25th anniversary with a fundraising gala at the Royal Ontario Museum. The evening will feature celebrities and two fashion shows featuring local designers. One hundred per cent of ticket sales will support community programs.

tfi25

TFI is part of the City of Toronto's Business Incubation Program, which works collaboratively with organizations to provide a continuum of programs, services and resources to support small business growth and development.

fashionincubator.com

Golnaz Ashtiani, 2011 TFI New Labels design winner (Photo by George Pimentel)

City opens second new spay-neuter clinic

THE Toronto Animal Services North Spay-Neuter Clinic officially opened its doors January 13. The new clinic is located within the Toronto Animal Services North Shelter at 1300 Sheppard Ave. W.

Staffed by Toronto Animal Services veterinarians and technicians, the clinic performs spaying and neutering for Toronto Animal Services' animals.

Clinic staff also offer limited cat sterilization services to the public. Toronto residents can call 416-338-6281 to find out how to book an appointment to have their cat spayed or neutered at this new clinic.

The renovation of the North clinic, including enhanced animal caging, has been funded solely by donation dollars. This ongoing support will continue to equip the clinic with supplies needed to perform the surgeries, and it will aid in adopting animals out to homes throughout Toronto.

In 2011, Toronto Animal Services sterilized almost 4,500 animals, many of which were successfully adopted into life-long, loving homes.

Toronto's accomplishment in adopting animals was nationally recognized when Animal Services received the Summit Animal Homing Award in 2011 — an award that recognizes an organization's outstanding achievement in adoptions.

toronto.ca/animalservices

Doors Open Toronto Photography Contest: CITY IN FOCUS 2011

THE first-ever Doors Open Toronto photography contest was launched as part of a special focus on architecture and photography. The photographs were taken at official Doors Open Toronto buildings during the 2011 event. Photos of the winners in each category were featured in the last edition of Our Toronto. In this issue, we congratulate and feature the runners-up in each category.

BUILDING EXTERIOR

1st runner up – Robert Brienza

2nd runner up – Tony Zhou

BUILDING INTERIOR

1st runner up – Sham Herman

ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL

1st runner up – Rachel Nixon

2nd runner up – Steve Mostacci

DOOR

1st runner up – Jason Cook

2nd runner up – Elgin Evidente